National/regional minimum wages

2192. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far in regard to propsals for national regional minimum wages for about 100 million workers employed in agricultural fields construction sites and other unorganised vocations; and

(b) the text of Government announcement made in the beginning of the current financial year to assist State Governments in enforcing minimum wages for the farm labour and other unorganised workers (Hindustan Times dated 21st December, 1986) and also the State-wise progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) The Central Government had circulated draft guidelines on regional minimum wages to the State Governments/Union Territories on the 6th May, 1986. As per these guidelines, the regional minimum wages should be fixed employment-wise for selected employments within the region. The draft guidelines are expected to be finalised soon. The State Governments have been requested to identify the employments for which they will like to have regional minimum wages fixed.

(b) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme on pilot basis in four States, *viz.* Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa and Manipur for giving financial assistance and strengthening their implementation machinery for the effective enforcement of minimum wages in the employment of agriculture has been started. Under the scheme, 200 Rural Labour Inspectors are to be appointed in the Development Blocks where population of agricultural workers belonging to SC/ST is more than 70 per cent. The target for appointment of Rural Labour Inspectors and the number of Inspectors actually appointed as per information furnished by the State Governments so far are given as under:—

	Target	No. of RLIs. actually appointed.
1. Madhya Pradesh	85	42
2. Rajasthan . .	37	34
3. Orissa . . .	65	65
4. Manipur . .	13	13
	200	154

Depletion of Forests

2193. SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a report published in the Times of India of the 2nd January, 1987 that any effort falling short of planting 10 billion saplings a year would be inadequate even to counter the present rate of depletion of forests and therefore much more short of attaining the desired 60 per cent forest cover to attain a proper ecological balance; and

(b) what are the facts and the consequences thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the National Remote Sensing Agency, rate of depletion of forest cover during 1972-75 to 1980-82 was 1.3 million hectares per year. The National Wastelands Development Board has been set up with the object of bringing 5 million hectares of land every year under fuel-